Memorial Drive Bridge
Rock Creek Park
Washington
District of Columbia

HAER No. DC-30

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Engineering Record
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
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HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD
MORROW DRIVE BRIDGE
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Location:	Morrow Drive Bridge, located approximately one-fourth mile west of the intersection of Morrow Drive and Sixteenth Street in Rock Creek Park, carries this road over a gully as it winds uphill and out of the park, Washington, D.C.
Date of Construction:	1911.
Designer and Builder:	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.
Present Owner:	National Park Service.
Present Use:	Vehicular crossing.
Significance:	This arch crossing, with its native gneiss stone facing, exemplifies the rustic-type design that was popular in parks in the early twentieth century, and is seen in retaining walls throughout Rock Creek Park.
Project Information:	The documentation of Rock Creek and Potomac Parkway was undertaken as a two-year pilot project to help establish standards and guidelines for recording the structures and landscape features of park roads and parkways. This project was a joint effort of the Historic American Buildings Survey and the Historic American Engineering Record (HABS/HAER), a combined division of the National Park Service, Robert Kapsch, chief. The project was sponsored by the Park Roads Program of the National Park Service, John Gingles, deputy chief, Safety Services Division. The project supervisor was Sara Amy Leach, HABS historian. The Washington-based summer 1992 documentation team was headed by landscape architect Robert Harvey (Iowa State University-Department of Landscape Architecture) who served as field supervisor; the landscape architects were Deborah Warshaw (University of Virginia) and Dorota Pape-Siliwonczuk (US/ICOMOS-Poland, Board of Historical Palaces and Gardens Restoration); the architects were Evan Miller (University of Colorado-Boulder), Steven Nose (University of Maryland), and Tony Arcaro (Catholic University). The historians were Tim Davis (University of Texas) and Amy Ross (University of Virginia). Jack E. Boucher made the large-format photographs; Air Survey Corporation of Sterling, Virginia, produced the aerial photography and digital mapping from which the site-plan delineations were made.

History

The Morrow Drive Bridge was built to carry the new road of the same name, which entered the park from Kennedy Street. This small structure was built by hired day laborers. It cost $2,192, with $636 spent on materials and $1,555 on the workers. It was one of three park bridges built in 1911 of a substantial masonry appearance, the other two were both on axis with Beach Drive and do not survive.[1]

Description

The bridge crosses a tributary of Rock Creek at an angle, causing its concrete arch to have a serrated soffit, with one part off-setting the other like the underside of a step.[2] Its rustic design was achieved by facing the concrete with native gray gneiss stone. The overall length of this structure is 65', and the width of the roadway it carries is 21'.[3]

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[1] Board of Control of Rock Creek Park, Report of the Secretary, Operations from the Establishment of the Park, September 27, 1890 to June 30, 1912 (Washington, D. C.: Board of Control, 1912), 19.

[2] Zack Spratt, "Rock Creek's Bridges," Records of the Columbia Historical Society 53-56 (1959): 108.

[3] William Bushong, Historic Resource Study: Rock Creek Park, District of Columbia (Washington, D. C.: National Park Service, 1990), 177.